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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 02/06/12

SPONSOR Cisneros LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE Red River Watershed Planning SB 211

ANALYST van Moorsel

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY12	FY13		
	100.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From
Department of Environment

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 211 appropriates \$100,000 from the general fund to the Department of Environment (NMED) for expenditure in FY13 to conduct community-based watershed planning for river restoration of the Red River.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$100,000 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY13 shall revert to the general fund.

The NMED reports that the appropriation in the bill would assist NMED with meeting the 40 percent match requirement for its federal Clean Water Act section 319 grant, under which the department supports watershed planning and “on the ground” projects by funding groups whose goal is watershed protection.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

According to the NMED, watershed planning is a crucial initial component to restoring and protecting New Mexico’s rivers. Water quality of the Red River and its watershed has been

adversely affected by numerous sources, including historic mining activities in the upper watershed, the Questa Molycorp mine and tailings, septic tanks, and livestock access to the river corridor. Effective restoration includes participation of all parties involved, such as federal and state agencies, communities and their leaders, and nonprofit groups.

The NMED adds that the Red River and its tributaries experience an estimated 107,000 angler-days per year. Restoration and protection of the watershed is important to the local economy and the preservation of jobs, and the bill would fund a project to identify means of protecting and improving this economic resource.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The NMED noted that it would need to go through the procurement process to fund the watershed planning efforts. Additionally, the NMED would be required to oversee the planning effort and certify the work conducted. Such activities are already part of NMED's Nonpoint Source Management Program and are funded under the aforementioned U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Clean Water Act Section 319 grant.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

NMED reports that Red River watershed planning and restoration efforts will go unfunded, absent federal funding.

PvM/amm